NCW's request on adultery

2168. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRIMATI SYEDAANWARA TAIMUR:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Commission for Women has approached Government to make adulter ' a civil wrong and not a criminal offence, as at present,

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government regarding the proposal that women be not punished for adultery as she is 'victim' and not the 'offender'; and

(c) whether, as it may require amendment to existing sections of the Criminal Law, Government may try to get consensus of political outfits State Governments, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) Yes, Sir. In the comments furnished by the National Commission for Women to the Ministry of Women and Child Development in respect of a reference made to the Commission by the Ministry, following a petition submitted to the Hon'ble President, the Commission has made a recommendation that the issue of adultery should be viewed as a breach of trust and treated as a civil wrong rather than a criminal offence but this should be done only after working out a national consensus in the matter.

(b) As per the existing provision in section 497 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, the wife (who is involved in adultery) shall not be punishable as an abettor.

(c) The recommendations of the Commission on the subject are under examination of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Reforms in mineral exploration

2169. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to commit itself to a time bound mineral exploration process by setting time-lines for grant of prospecting and mining licences and set up an independent mining tribunal to settle disputes;